



HATFIELD

Incorporated:1670

Hampshire County

The Town of Hatfield is an historic agricultural river town on the west bank of the Connecticut River. Large land grants were made to Governor Bradstreet and Major General Dennison in 1659, and the town's early Colonial settlement in 1660 was compatible with Indian life. The Nonotucks reserved their right to erect wigwams on the common, plant, hunt and fish. In 1662, Thomas Meekins operated a grist mill on the Mill River and in 1669 he added a sawmill. The first linseed oil mill was patented and established in 1737, and cider mills were opened. Residents raised sheep and cattle and the town was described as a "prosperous town on a strong agricultural base." In 1786 the town was the site of a 50-community meeting of the rebels involved in Shay's rebellion, who were angered by the hardships and foreclosures brought on by a cash-poor economy. When they weren't fighting or rebelling, residents of Hatfield grew corn and made brooms, which became a major industry in the town. Irish, German and French Canadian immigrants, drawn to work in building the railroads in the state, finished the track and set up as farmers in Hatfield, as did later arrivals from Poland, Austria and Czechoslovakia. The farmers raised wheat and by 1905 were the leading tobacco and onion producers in the state. There are still over 120 tobacco barns in Hatfield. Benefactors in the town shared their prosperity with their neighbors. Sophia Smith, an heiress to one of the largest fortunes in Hatfield, used her money to create Smith College, while Caleb Cooley Dickinson founded Dickinson Hospital in Northampton. Main Street in Hatfield retains a remarkable historic character, with a dense concentration of well preserved 18th and 19th century family homes.

(Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)

Population: 3249 (2000 census)

Government: Annual Town Meeting; Board of Selectmen

School Superintendent:

Public Schools: Dorothy M. Breor Elementary School k-6
Smith Academy 7-12

Shopping: local convenience stores; 5 minutes to Northampton

Recreational Facilities:

Child Care Providers: 413-582-4218

Child Care Focus
56 Vernon Street
Northampton, MA 01060
--provides a list of licensed childcare facilities

Total Area: 16.83 square miles +/-

Tax Rate: \$10.64 (2009)

Colleges and Universities: none

Private Schools: none

Libraries: Hatfield Public Library 247-9097

Utilities: Cable: AT&T Broadband 1-888-633-4266
Electric: Western Mass Electric Co. 800-286-2000
Gas: Berkshire Gas Company 586-3677
Telephone: Verizon 800-870-9999

For More Information:

Town hall: 247-9200

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